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ABSTRACT

What really happens in an inspection of a primary school? Some answers to this question, with a focus on the technical and emotional results of such evaluations, are provided in this text. It is based on a research project involving over 80 interviews in 12 case studies of inspections carried out in England. The book, which is intended for primary school teachers, principals, and administrators, claims that inspections are conditional, negotiated, and subject to the changes of human nature. It explores tensions between judgment and development, myth and reality, evidence and interpretation, and the institution and the individual, examining issues about power, professionalism, objectivity, credibility, and confidence. Some of the features of the changing culture of inspection are covered along with the expectations and preconceptions associated with these appraisals. Processes for gathering evidence, the ways in which roles function, the reliability of data, and the feedback process are likewise detailed. How school personnel emotionally respond to and interpret the inspection regime are examined at length, along with the nature of relationships and rituals. Threads for the entire procedure are finally interwoven to form a mosaic of the process. (Includes case studies, an index, and 66 references.) (RJM)

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